

OAK Fund Annual Report: 2017-2018

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Executive Summary

The Open Access to Knowledge (OAK) Fund at Texas A&M underwrites publication charges for scholarly journal articles, book chapters, and monographs published in open access publications in order to encourage the shift to publishing Texas A&M's research that is free of subscription barriers and support the transition of scholarship towards open science models¹ that can help meet Texas A&M's strategic goals.

Major outcomes for 2017-2018:

- The OAK Fund distributed funds to 300 faculty, staff and graduate students from 13 colleges/research organizations and five campuses.
- The OAK Fund supported the publication fees for 77 articles and two book chapters for a total amount of funding distributed of \$105,842.

In the past we received a number of communications from TAMU faculty concerning ineligible coauthors, so we made two procedural changes to address these concerns:

- Amended the OAK Fund eligibility rules to allow for support of graduate student authors.
- Amended the OAK Fund eligibility rules to allow for support of non-TAMU coauthors when a TAMU author is the lead author on the paper as evidence by authorship sequence or corresponding author.

What are the Goals of the Program?

The Open Access to Knowledge (OAK) Fund at Texas A&M underwrites publication charges for scholarly journal articles, book chapters, and monographs published in open access publications. The OAK Fund was established in 2013 to help fulfill Texas A&M University's commitment to the Compact for Open-Access Publishing Equity (<http://www.oacompact.org/>).

The goals of the OAK Fund at Texas A&M University are to support and encourage:

- (1) Texas A&M faculty and research staff that want to publish in open-access venues but who do not have other sources of funding to cover open access publication charges.
- (2) Innovative scholarly publishing that takes advantage of the opportunities of distribution and open access presented by digital and networking technologies; and
- (3) Increased access to Texas A&M research and scholarship.

The Texas A&M Libraries and the Vice President for Research committed \$50,000 and \$50,000, respectively to fund Open Access publications for the 2017-2018 academic years. Additionally there was another \$5000 from the Office of Graduate and Professional Students (OGAPS) to help fund graduate students. This document reports on the outcomes for the 2017-2018 academic year of the OAK Fund program.

¹ National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2018. Open Science by Design: Realizing a Vision for 21st Century Research. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/25116>.

How is the Program Managed?

Eligibility

Any current member of the faculty, full-time research staff, or graduate students at Texas A&M University and the Texas A&M Health Sciences Center are eligible to apply to the OAK Fund, including researchers at the Galveston or Qatar campuses or affiliated State Agencies who hold joint appointments at Texas A&M University. OAK Funds apply to Open Access publication charges fees for peer-reviewed articles and book chapters or scholarly monographs published in journals or monographs that provide free online access to all peer-reviewed articles they publish. Manuscripts published in journals or monographs with a hybrid open-access model or delayed open-access model are not eligible for support from the OAK Fund.

Application review Process

The Office of Scholarly Communications (OSC) in the Sterling C. Evans Library administers the OAK Fund. OSC has advertised the program through campus-wide emails, a website, and presentations to various groups around campus. The OAK Fund application review process is as follows:

1. The application and eligibility for funding can be found at https://library.tamu.edu/services/scholarly_communication/Open_Access/oakfund.html.
2. Author(s) status verified against campus LDAP database. Publication OA and peer review status are verified using: Directory of Open Access Journals, Ulrich's Periodicals Directory, or Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association member list. Publication fees checked against fee schedule on publisher's website.
3. If eligibility criteria met, Project Manager calculates individual author allocation based on total OA fee divided by number of eligible TAMU authors. Cumulative allocations to authors are tracked. Each author can request a maximum of \$3000 per annum.
4. If the application is approved and ready for payment, an acceptance letter is sent to applicant and TAMU co-authors with directions for payment/reimbursement via Library Business Office.
5. If application declined, an explanatory letter is sent detailing reasons and, where necessary, pointers to relevant resources provided in support of successful future application.
6. The article is archived in the faculty publications collection in Oak Trust, Texas A&M's institutional repository.

What are the Program Outcomes?

What was funded?

The OAK Fund distributed funds to 300 faculty, staff and graduate students in support of publication fees for 77 articles and two book chapters for a total amount of funding distributed of \$105,842 in the 2017-2018 academic year. Awards averaged \$1360 per application (Table 1).

Table 1. OAK Fund awards, 2017-2018.

Award Characteristics	Amount
2017-2018 Applications Funded	77 (4 pending)
2016-2017 Applications Funded	76
2013-2015 Applications Funded	75
Average Award Amount	\$1360
Highest Award	\$3000
Lowest Award	\$135

OAK Funds were distributed to faculty from 51 departments or organizations in 13 different colleges/Research organizations and five campuses: TAMU, TAMUG, the Health Sciences Center, the College of Pharmacy, and the TAMU AgriLife Research (Table 2). Note: There are more awards when listing by college because many papers had coauthors from different colleges.

The distribution of OAK Funds to different organizations has increased since the first year of the fund, illustrating increased faculty awareness of the funding and a greater movement towards interest in open access publishing across all disciplines. This resulted in a fairly even distribution of the awards by College.

Table 2. Number of authors funded by the OAK Fund by college, 2017-2018.

College	Number of Awards
Ag & Life Sciences	33
Architecture	2
Education	32
Engineering	30
Geosciences	7
Liberal Arts	12
Medicine	12
School of Public Health	17
Science	2
Vet. Med. & Biomed. Sci.	47
Health Sciences Center	9
Texas A&M AgriLife Research	6
College of Pharmacy	3
TAMU-Galveston	12

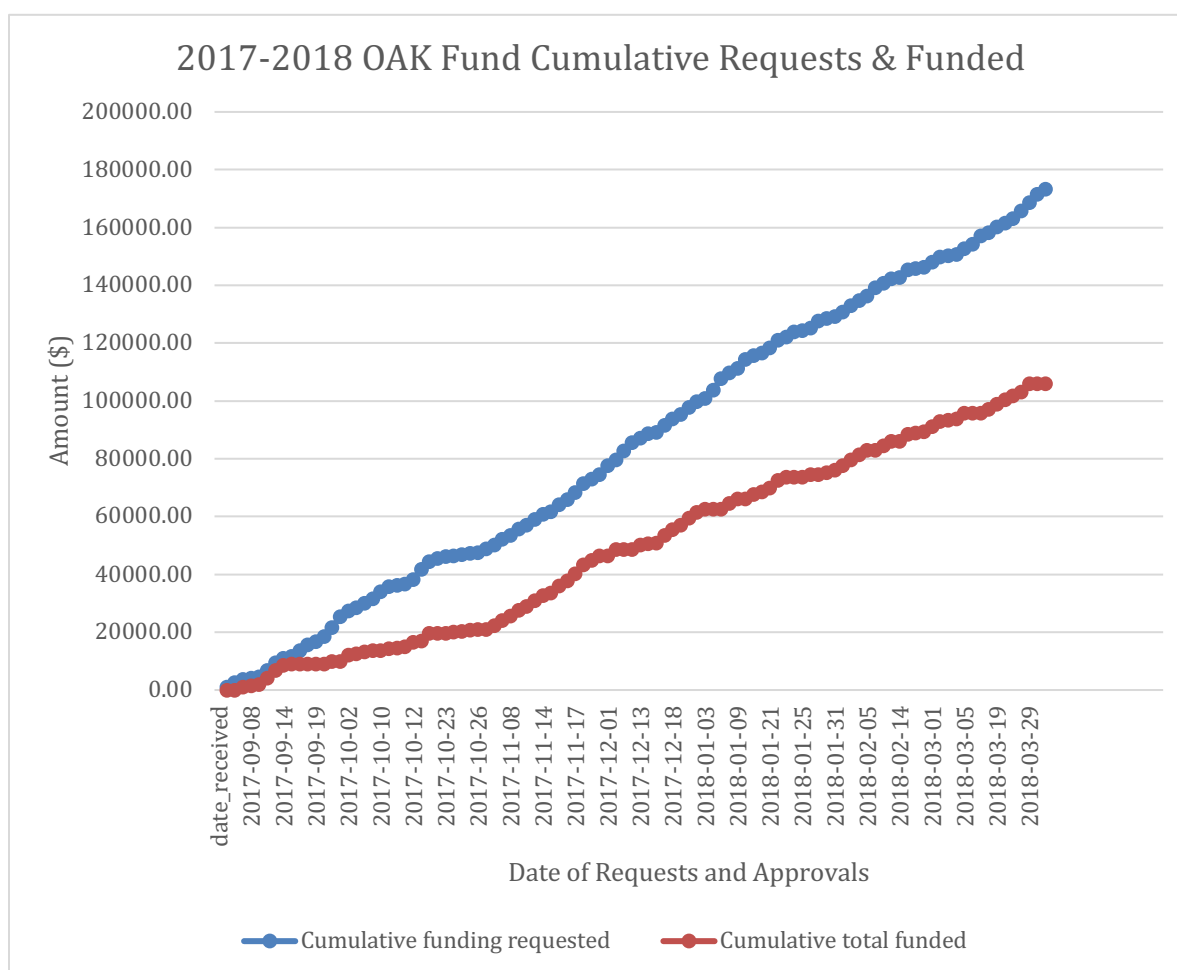
Who was funded?

Requested funds continued to exceed amount funded, as has been found in previous years (Fig. 1). This was mainly due to two reasons. First, twenty-nine applications were denied because they did not meet the fund's guidelines for eligibility. Most of the declined awards requested support to cover publication fees for hybrid Open Access journals that also charge subscriptions in addition to single article OA publication fees.

In response to reasonable criticisms of previous funding rules this year the two recommendations made in the 2016-2017 Oakfund Report were implemented. Graduate students became eligible along with faculty and staff. This year 58 graduate students were among the 300 authors funded.

Second, at the start of the year many requests could not be fully funded under existing funding rules because the manuscripts were authored by both eligible and ineligible authors. From September to November 2017 eight multi-institutional articles were partially funded under the old eligibility rules. For the remainder of the fiscal year we changed the eligibility rules to fully fund multiple institution articles if the lead or corresponding author was from TAMU. As a result, this funding cycle 35 multi-institutional articles were fully funded that otherwise would have only gotten partial funding.

Figure 1. OAK Fund cumulative requests and awards, 2017-2018.



The growing popularity of the TAMU authors publishing in OA journals is reflected in the fact that this year even with \$20,000 more funds for OAK Fund than last year the total \$105,000 available was all encumbered by early April this year. There were also 100 more TAMU authors publishing with OAK Funds this year than last.

Increased Access to High Quality Texas A&M Research and Scholarship through Open Access

Research being published Open Access (OA) through support from the Open Access to Knowledge (OAK) Fund is distributed across academic disciplines. An interesting change from previous years is the broader range of journals that are being used by TAMU authors. The repeat journals are mostly ones used in previous years such as Scientific Reports, PLOS One, Peer J, Frontiers in Psychology, and BioMedCentral titles, accounting for 36 of the articles funded this year (47% of total) (See Table 3). Over half of the articles this year are in single titles many of which are new to OAK Fund support this year. This consisted of 41 of the articles funded this year (53% of total).

It appears that TAMU authors are broadening their sights and finding new to them Open Access journals in which to publish. All of those funded were verified as quality peer reviewed OA journals in the application review process. Where last year 67% of the funded articles were from just four of the oldest and most reputable OA journals, this year TAMU authors have greatly broadened the scope of the OA journals being used.

Table 3. Top journals of papers supported by OAK Fund awards, 2017-2018.

Journal Name	Articles Funded (#)	JCR Rank	JCR Quartile	Categories
Scientific Reports (Nature)	8	12/64	Q1	Multidisciplinary
PLOS One	6	15/64	Q1	Multidisciplinary
Peer J	4	19/64	Q2	Multidisciplinary
Frontiers in Psychology	4	39/135	Q2	Psychology
BMC Genetics	3	93/171	Q3	Genetics
Journal of Medical Internet Research	3	6/94	Q1	Healthcare Sci.
BMC Public Health	2	63/180	Q2	Public Health
Journal of education and Training Studies	2	NA	NA	
Cogent Education	2	NA	NA	
DATABASE – Journal of Biological databases and Curation	2	4/59	Q1	Math. & Comp. Biology